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British Columbia News

Joint statement on the first case of 2019 novel coronavirus in B.C.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/21460>

Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer (PHO), have issued the following joint statement regarding a case of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV):

"Late yesterday, our BC Centre for Disease Control public health lab confirmed a positive test for 2019-nCoV.

"The person is a male in his forties and a resident in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. He travels regularly to China for work and was in Wuhan city on his most recent trip. He returned to Vancouver last week and had an onset of symptoms after his return.

"On Sunday, Jan. 26, he followed public health messaging, contacted a primary health-care provider to notify them that he had travelled to Wuhan city, was experiencing symptoms and would be coming for assessment and care.

"Following established protocols, the primary-care provider notified the Vancouver Coastal Health medical health officer and administered the diagnostic test.

"Late last night, the test came back positive.

"Public health officials are in regular contact with the individual and a small number of close contacts. He is in isolation at home.

"The risk of spread of this virus within British Columbia remains low at this time. All necessary precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of infection. We have multiple systems in place to prepare for, detect and respond, in order to prevent the spread of serious infectious diseases in the province.

"The BC Centre for Disease Control has a team of experts that support the Province's operations in monitoring and controlling communicable and vaccine-preventable diseases. The team has developed a diagnostic test for this new coronavirus and is co-ordinating staff and supplies to ensure potential cases can be detected quickly and accurately.

"The PHO is responsible for monitoring and assessing the health status of the population, making recommendations for strategies to address health issues and implementing immediate actions when necessary to protect the health of the public. The PHO has directed health-care workers to be vigilant and to take a travel history for anyone reporting respiratory symptoms.

"It is not necessary for the general public to take special precautions beyond the usual measures recommended to prevent other common respiratory viruses during the winter period. Regular handwashing, coughing or sneezing into your elbow sleeve, disposing of tissues appropriately and avoiding contact with sick people are important ways to prevent the spread of respiratory illness generally.

"Anyone who is concerned they may have been exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of the coronavirus should contact their primary-care provider, local public health office or call 811."

Learn More:

For more information and latest updates on 2019-nCoV, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter

@CDCofBC or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/> (<http://www.bccdc.ca/>)

For a Chinese translation,

visit: https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Joint_Statement_Coronavirus__Traditional_Chinese.pdf

(https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Joint_Statement_Coronavirus__Traditional_Chinese.pdf)

For a Punjabi translation, visit: https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Joint_Statement_Coronavirus_Punjabi.pdf

(https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Joint_Statement_Coronavirus_Punjabi.pdf)

A backgrounder follows.

Ministry of Health

Communications

250 952-1887 (media line)

Backgrounders

Emergency management protocols

The Ministry of Health and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer have emergency management protocols in place to respond to the ongoing risk of 2019-nCoV.

The protocols include operating a Provincial Co-ordinating Committee, co-chaired by B.C.'s provincial health officer and deputy minister of health, that centralizes co-ordination and oversight of work underway at BC Emergency Health Service, BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), HealthLink, Provincial Health Services Authority, local medical health officers and primary-care clinicians.

The protocols help ensure timely information and communication on situational updates, co-ordinate responses to emerging issues, and that all required resources are available for preparedness and response – including staffing and supply capacity.

Federal and provincial public-health teams are in regular communication with health-care providers, public-health and airport authorities to keep them apprised of the situation.

Health-care workers throughout B.C. are continuing to be vigilant for further 2019-nCoV cases and will report suspected cases to local medical health officers for further investigation.

Anyone who is concerned they may have been exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of, the coronavirus should contact their primary-care provider, local public health office or call 811.

British Columbians should avoid all travel to the province of Hubei, including the cities of Wuhan, Huanggang and Ezhou, due to heavy travel restrictions to limit the spread of 2019-nCoV.

Anyone travelling to or from China is advised to visit the federal travel and tourism website, the source of destination-specific travel information that provides advice to help travellers make informed decisions and travel safely while abroad: www.travel.gc.ca (<http://www.travel.gc.ca/>)